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EXAMINER

TAYLOR, VICTOR J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2863

DATE MAILED: 08/18/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/973,529

Applicant(s)

THOMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Victor J. Taylor

Art Unit

2863

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-15 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 16-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-6 and 17-19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 October 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 11.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☒ Other: *Office Action*.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the claimed processing steps of computing a frequency dependent characteristic with the steps of using this characteristic to estimate the formation property of the formation must be shown in a new block and level diagram or flow chart or similar drawing with the necessary changes to the specification must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2. Figures 1 to 4 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. For example, Figure 1 is prior art to Figure 1 of the laboratory data of O'Hara 1989 and is incorporated on page 16 of the specifications, similarly Figure 2 is prior art to Figure 1D of O'Hara 1989, and Figure 3 is prior art to figure 3 of O'Hara 1989. Figure 4 is prior art to Figure 4 of the laboratory data of Christensen and Wang 1985 and incorporated on page 18 of the specifications. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrections are required.

Art Unit: 2863

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

4. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is in improper format and does not meet the requirements as disclosed above. The abstract at most comprises two lines and does not clearly describe the invention in the instant application. A new abstract is required. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

5. The incorporation of essential material in the specification by reference to a foreign application or patent, or to a publication is improper.

For example in the specification the applicant states that one embodiment of the invention as found on page 14 of the specification is a step and a simplification of the detailed data as found in the published literature by O'Hara 1985. Similar references are

Art Unit: 2863

made to other prior art publications and are found in the specification, for example further references are made to Christensen + Wang 1985 on page 18 in the specifications.

Applicant is required to amend the disclosure to include the material incorporated by reference. The amendment must be accompanied by an affidavit or declaration executed by the applicant, or a practitioner representing the applicant, stating that the amendatory material consists of the same material incorporated by reference in the referencing application. See *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 569, 179 USPQ 157 (CCPA 1973); *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 579, 179 USPQ 163 (CCPA 1973); and *In re Hawkins*, 486 F.2d 577, 179 USPQ 167 (CCPA 1973).

Claim Objections

6. Claims 4, 5, 6, 17, 18, and 19 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Claim 4 further limits claim 3 with the reference to the step of determining frequency dependence that does not exist in claim 3 with a limitation of carrying out the cross correlation analysis. The antecedent basis for this step is not in claim 3. Claims 5 and 6 depend on claim 4 and are in improper dependent form. Corrections are required.

Claim 17 further limits claim 16 with the reference to the step of determining frequency dependence that does not exist in claim 16 with a limitation of carrying out

Art Unit: 2863

the frequency component analysis. The antecedent basis for this step is not in claim 16. Claims 18 and 19 depend on claim 17 and are in improper dependent form. Corrections are required.

7. Claims 1, 20, and 22 are objected to because of the following informalities:

I. The use of the wording of "mudweight" in claim 1, and the use of the word "drilling mud" in claim 22 to describe the drilling fluid used to drill the wellbore is objected to in the specification. For purposes of examination, the examiner will consider the "drilling mud" to comprise the chemical composite of the drilling fluid used for drilling oil wells, and the term of "mudweight" to comprise the drilling fluid weight and chemical composition of drilling fluids commonly used in the art of drilling oil wells.

II. The use of the term of "pore pressures" of formations in claim 20 is objected to in the specification. For purposes of examination, the examiner will consider the "pore pressure of formations" to comprise one of the many lithological characteristics of the geological formation and commonly referred to as the formation evaluation parameters with other formation parameters that are commonly used in the art of drilling oil wells. Appropriate correction is required.

Information Disclosure Statement

8. The information disclosure statement filed in paper 4 on January 29, 2002 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1), which requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered. The IDS

Art Unit: 2863

comprises six pages of various patents and many multiple publications. Copies of these publications were not submitted for review during this office action and consequently were not consider during the examination unless so cited by the examiner on the USPTO form 892.

Prior Art

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant;

I. Dubinsky et al., US 6,021,377 is cited for the drilling system using the borehole tool BHA 51A in figure 1 in combination with the sensors in lines 1-30 of column 6.

II Robbins et al., US 5,678,643 is cited for the acoustic logging while drilling using the BHA 65 in figure 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) The invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Art Unit: 2863

11. Claims 1-11, and 16-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by MacDonald et al., in US 6,206,108.

With regard to claim 1, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of a generating a source signal from a bottom hole assembly, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses generating a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the generation of signals 780 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

b. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of detecting at least one receiver signal using said bottom hole assembly, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

c. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of computing a frequency dependent characteristic of said at least one receiver signal, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21 and discloses computing these formation evaluation sensor signals 912 in the downhole processor 910 to computer the frequency dependent 792 component 796 in figure 9 and discloses the look ahead frequency dependent component 816 in figure 10A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

d. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using said frequency dependent characteristic to estimate a property of a formation in the region of said

Art Unit: 2863

bottom hole assembly, in (The formation porosity of the BHA parameters among other lithological characteristics in lines 30-35 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21 and discloses computing these formation evaluation sensor signals 912 in the downhole processor 910 to computer the frequency dependent 792 component 796 in figure 9 and discloses the look ahead frequency dependent component 816 in figure 10A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

e. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using said frequency dependent characteristic to specify said mudweight, in (The BHA 90 using the measured parameters of the sensors and parameters which including the temperatures of the BHA with the fluid parameters of the drilling fluid in lines 35-40 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1. Here the drilling fluid is the drilling mud and is disclosed as the weight of the viscosity, the density weight and the chemical composition in lines 43-50 of column 5 which comprises the chemical drilling mud weight density.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets

As to claim 2, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the BHA comprises a drilling apparatus, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

Art Unit: 2863

As to claim 3, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the BHA emits a noise spectrum generated by a drill bit of said drilling apparatus, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 see T1 on the drill bit 50 in figure 3B.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 4, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the frequency dependence is carried out by cross correlation analysis, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 in the processing of interactive models 830 in figure 10B.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 5, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the receiver signal comprises a direct formation signal and formation surrounds said borehole, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the received signal 792 direct from the formation 786 that surround the borehole 726 in figure 9.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 6, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the receiver signal is a reflected signal and said formation is ahead of the borehole, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the reflected signal 792 looking ahead 795 of the borehole in figure 9.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 7, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the frequency dependent characteristic is amplitude modulation, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the formation sensors 912 that detect changes in amplitude of the transmitted signal to control and process formation characteristics in the processor 910 of figure 11A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

Art Unit: 2863

As to claim 8, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the formation property is pore pressure, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the drilling formation evaluation sensors 912 and discloses the pore pressure and density measurements in line 35 of column 5.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 9, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the pore pressure is estimated from a frequency dependent attenuation relationship, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the adjustable frequency of the source 780 used to determine the formation parameters with the serial processing that is common in current MWD systems and discloses this current MWD for formation porosities in lines 1-22 of column 19.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 10, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the frequency dependent characteristics is wave propagation velocity, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and computes the velocity in the model 948 and with the processor 940 in figure 11B.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 11, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the formation property is pore pressure, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and in the porosity and density measurements disclosed in lines 1-20 of column 19.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 16, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the source signal is generated by an active source on said BHA, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 in the

Art Unit: 2863

element 51A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 17, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the determining frequency dependence is carried out by a frequency component analysis, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the surface computer 940 in figure 11B.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 18, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the one receive signal comprises a direct borehole signal, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with direct bed boundary 932 distances in figure 11B.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

As to claim 19, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of the formation property is permeability, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 with the formation sensors 912 in figure 11A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

With regard to claim 20, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of
a. Generating a source signal from a bottom hole assemblies, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses generating a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the generation of signals 780 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

b. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of detecting at least one receiver signal using said bottom hole assembly, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of

Art Unit: 2863

signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

c. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using said source and receiver signal to estimate a pore pressure of a formation, in (The formation porosity of the BHA parameters among other lithological characteristics in lines 30-35 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

d. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of repeating steps a), b), c), as said BHA moves sequentially downward through said formations, in (The BHA 90 in figure 1 in combination with the drilling and the downhole processor 910 in figure 11A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets

With regard to claim 21, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of

a. Generating a source signal from a bottom hole assemblies, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses generating a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the generation of signals 780 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

b. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of detecting at least one receiver signal using said bottom hole assembly, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of

Art Unit: 2863

signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

c. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using said source signal and receiver signal to determine a pore pressure of a formation, in (The formation porosity of the BHA parameters among other lithological characteristics in lines 30-35 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

d. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using the pore pressure to monitor the wellbore pressure safety margin, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 in combination with the formation evaluation 912 to selective operate the drilling operation 913 in figure 11A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

e. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of repeating steps a), b), c), d), as said BHA moves sequentially downward through said formations, in (The BHA 90 in figure 1 in combination with the drilling and the downhole processor 910 in figure 11A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets

With regard to claim 22, MacDonald et al., discloses the limitation of

a. Generating a source signal from a bottom hole assemblies, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses generating a source signal 792 in figure 9, and

Art Unit: 2863

discloses the generation of signals 780 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

b. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of detecting at least one receiver signal using said bottom hole assembly, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

c. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using said source signal and receiver signal to determine a pore pressure of a formation ahead of the BHA, in (The formation porosity of the BHA parameters among other lithological characteristics in lines 30-35 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses receiving a source signal 792 in figure 9, and discloses the receiving of signals 782 on the BHA 90 in lines 38-43 of column 21 and discloses the look ahead frequency dependent component 816 in figure 10A.) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

d. MacDonald et al., further discloses the limitation of using the pore pressure to specify a weight of drilling mud corresponding to a target wellbore pressure safety margin, in (The drilling system 10 of figure 1 and discloses adjusting the drilling fluid using the drilling sensor data 820 to control the drilling parameters 956 and operate the drilling with in safe parameters 913 of figure 11A with the fluid parameters of the drilling fluid in lines 35-40 of column 5 in combination with the measurement system of the drilling system 10 of figure 1. Here the drilling fluid is the drilling mud and is disclosed as

Art Unit: 2863


the weight of the viscosity, the density weight and the chemical composition in lines 43-50 of column 5 which comprises the chemical drilling mud weight density) The claim limitations are underlined with the disclosures in the art in the brackets.

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Victor J. Taylor whose telephone number is 703-305-4470. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E. Barlow can be reached on 703-308-3126. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-4509 for regular communications and 703-308-5841 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-306-3431.


Victor J. Taylor
Examiner
Art Unit 2863
VICTOR J. TAYLOR
PATENT EXAMINER

August 10, 2003